

Message Text

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, OAS, UY
SUBJ: VIII OASGA: GOU POSITION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: (A) MONTEVIDEO 1452 (B) MONTEVIDEO 1664

1. REFS DESCRIBED THE INTENSE INFIGHTING DURING THE PAST TWO MONTHS WITHIN THE GOU OVER THE POSITION IT SHOULD TAKE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AT THE VIII OASGA. MODERATE MILITARY AND CIVILIAN ELEMENTS, TRYING TO BUILD ON THE POSITIVE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION VISITS, HAVE PRESSED FOR A NON-POLEMICAL RESPONSE TO THE INTER AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION REPORT ON URUGUAY, A DIPLOMATIC EFFORT TO RESUME DIALOGUE WITH THE COMMISSION AND A PUBLIC PRESENTATION WHICH EMPHASIZES THIS AND OTHER POSITIVE STEPS SUCH AS RESTORATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (ICRC). THEY HAVE FACED THE STRONG RESISTANCE OF THE MILITARY AND CIVILIAN HARDLINERS WHO, IN THE NAME OF HONOR AND SOVEREIGNTY, DEMAND AN ALL OUT ATTACK ON THE IAHRC AND ITS REPORT AND ON USG HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES, TO INCLUDE A DENUNCIATION OF ALLEGED U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS.

2. THIS WEEK THERE WAS A SHOWDOWN IN THE ARMED FORCES POLITICAL COMMISSION (COMASPO), WHICH WAS GIVEN SPECIAL OVER-SECRET

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SIGHT OVER ALL FOREIGN POLICY MATTERS FOLLOWING THE DIPLOMATIC DEBACLE OF THE REJECTED URUGUAYAN INVITATION TO THE VIII OASGA. APPEARING ALONE TO PRESENT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY POSITION TO COMASPO, FORMIN ROVIRA DISCARDED THE MODERATE POSITION PREPARED FOR HIM BY MINISTRY FOREIGN POLICY DIRECTOR GIAMBRUNO AND OAS AMBASSADOR MARQUES SERE AND INSTEAD PRESSED FOR A REPETITION OF THE NEGATIVE, CONFRONTATIONAL STANCE FOLLOWED AT THE

GRENADA OASGA. ROVIRA REPORTEDLY TRIED TO BOLSTER HIS CASE BY DISTORTING THE FACTS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE OAS EXTENDING "SPECIAL INVITEE" STATUS TO AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND BY CHARGES THAT THE USG WAS LAYING A TRAP, ENTICING THE GOU TOWARD MODERATION WHEN IT REALLY INTENDED TO DENOUNCE URUGUAY'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD AT THE VIII OASGA. ROVIRA EVEN URGED THAT RECENTLY REPLACED FOREIGN POLICY DIRECTOR ALVARO ALVAREZ, WHO LED THE CHARGE AT GRENADA, BE INCLUDED IN THE DELEGATION TO PERFORM A SIMILAR SERVICE IN WASHINGTON.

3. ADJOURNING TO CONDUCT ITS OWN INQUIRY INTO ROVIRA'S CHARGES COMASPO SUMMONED HIM (ROVIRA) THE FOLLOWING DAY TO REJECT HIS RECOMMENDATIONS. INSTEAD COMASPO SET THE FOLLOWING POLICY GUIDELINES WHICH ROVIRA IS TO STRICTLY ADHERE TO AT THE VIII OASGA:

A) URUGUAY WILL TAKE THE MODERATE POSITION ON HUMAN RIGHTS DESCRIBED IN PARA 1 AND WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO AVOID A POLEMICAL CONFRONTATION;

B) URUGUAY WILL TAKE THE NEGATIVE, HARDLINE POSITION ONLY IF PROVOKED BY AN ATTACK WHICH FORCES IT TO RESORT TO THIS POSITION TO DEFEND ITSELF AND REPLY IN KIND.

IN ADDITION, COMASPO REFUSED TO ADD ALVARO ALVAREZ TO THE SECRET

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DELEGATION BUT INSTEAD ADDED ARMY COLONEL ALBERTO LARROQUE, A DIRECTOR OF THE PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE (DINARP) OF THE PLANNING AND COORDINATION OFFICE(SEPLACODI). LARROQUE, A MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION TO THE RECENT UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING IN GENEVA, IS TO ACT AS COMASPO'S WATCHDOG TO ASSURE THAT ITS WISHES ARE CARRIED OUT.

4. COMMENT: COMASPO REPORTEDLY HAS NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT ROVIRA'S FIDELITY TO THE MODERATE POSITION AND IS CONCERNED LEST HE BETRAY IT BY SEEKING AND READILY FINDING SOME PROVOCATION, REAL OR IMAGINED, TO SWITCH. ALTHOUGH THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION AIDED BY LARROQUE CAN BE COUNTED ON TO TRY TO PREVENT THIS, ROVIRA WILL STILL BE IN A COMMANDING POSITION AS MINISTER AND DELEGATION HEAD. TOP LEVEL MILITARY AND CIVILIAN MODERATES HAVE THEREFORE STRESSED TO THE EMBASSY THE IMPORTANCE OF USG ASSISTANCE IN KEEPING THE SITUATION UNDER CONTROL AND IN KEEPING ROVIRA ON THE RESERVATION. THE MODERATES ALSO TRUST THAT WHEN PRESENTED THEIR MORE POSITIVE POSITION WILL MEET WITH A FORTHCOMING USG RESPONSE. THIS IN TURN COULD LEND MOMENTUM TO FURTHER PROGRESS BY THE GOU ON HUMAN RIGHTS. CHEEK

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